

## Severe Weather Events

Historically, during severe weather events such as ice storms, hurricanes, etc., regular dispatching has been replaced with calling fire departments via radio, providing them call information, and then allowing departments to send units as needed, with each unit maintaining its own times. Today, as call volume increases, Locution will truncate dispatches to speed up delivery of dispatch information. In addition, apparatus response to incidents can be reduced to single unit responses to speed dispatch time and decrease radio traffic.

If these methods are unsuccessful in handling severe weather call volume, a very similar approach to that used historically can be used with the current system. "Storm mode" must be initiated as needed by a respective department, based on their determination of need in their area. Unless notified of storm mode, the Raleigh/Wake ECC (RWECC) will dispatch units as normally recommended by CAD.

When deemed appropriate by a fire department official, a fire department can place themselves in "storm mode" for their department by contacting the County Fire telecommunicator at the RWECC.

During storm mode:

- The department will identify a single FD coordinator for RWECC to notify of pending events and for internal coordination (via FD DISP talkgroup).
  - As non-priority calls are received, RWECC will notify the FD coordinator of incidents that have been received. After relay to the FD, the call will be cleared from the pending queue.
  - Based upon their discretion, the department may choose to hold or send the desired units to the incident. Unit selection is determined by the fire department based upon availability and/or staffing. The FD coordinator (or designee) is responsible for tracking any/all desired times of dispatched units. Most responses will be reduced to a single engine/single unit.
  - The FD will track any/all times associated with incidents handled by the fire department.
  - **Only when in storm mode, it is acceptable for units to open calls in the pending call que and assign themselves (for incident tracking purposes); however, this should be done in coordination with the FD coordinator and RWECC telecommunicators so that they can be kept abreast of unit activity and call status.**
- A single operational or tactical talkgroup can be assigned to a department to handle all calls occurring within a response area. This will enable a department the ability to coordinate all responding units to different incidents on a single talkgroup. It is important to note that the talkgroup will not likely be monitored by a telecommunicator.
- Priority incidents (structure fires, motor vehicle accidents involving pin-in or overturned vehicle, medical incidents) will be dispatched by the RWECC based upon the standard CAD recommendation.
- No outside agencies will be dispatched inside of primary response areas, unless requested by the agency. Closest unit responses associated with Raleigh and Cary areas will be suspended during the duration of the storm mode.